

[2 August, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: It is very, very petty. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE:Sir, I have not even named the State. They have become agitated. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the Minister reply. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI ARUN SHOURIE: Sir, the VRS fund is not meant for creating capital assets. It is meant for enabling that particular unit or enterprise to function productively and create assets in the future. It is not meant to create assets by itself. This type of confusion has been deliberately created. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, I need your protection. My question will remain. Am I, by putting this question, creating confusion? I want a direction from you. Sir. He says I am creating confusion by putting this question. I seek your protection. Please see the record. If your direction is that by putting this question, I am creating confusion, I will withdraw my question. Otherwise, he has to reply to this question next week. He cannot get away. Please direct him to reply to my question next week or ask me to withdraw my question. I am prepared. Either he has to reply to this question again next week or I will withdraw my question, as you direct, Sir. (*Interruptions*). As a Minister, he cannot talk like this. I will not leave this matter. I want a reply to my supplementary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Foreign visits

*163 PROF. RAM DEO BHANDARY:

SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that he has visited a number of foreign countries during the last two years;
- (b) if so, the details of the foreign countries visited; and

(c) the outcome of each such visit?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) Sir, details of visits undertaken by External Affairs Minister are given in the Statement.

Statement Foreign visits by Minister of External Affairs, Shri Jaswant
Singh

SI. No	Name of the country visited	Details of the foreign visited	Outcome of each such visit
1.	Nepal (8-11 Sept. 1999)	September 8-11, 1999	Represented India in the inauguration ceremony by PM of Nepal of the BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences in Dhar an and the Maternity Hospital in Kathmandu, both developed with Indian assistance. Reviewed Indo-Nepal Relations.
2.	Kazakhstan (13-15 Sept. 1999)	Attended Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) 13-15 September 1999	EAM signed Declaration on the Principles Guiding Relations among the CICA Member Countries.
3.	New York, USA (19-29 Sept. 1999)	To attend the UNGA meeting held in New York, USA 19-September, 1999.	During the 54th UNGA, four countries publicly supported Indian candidature for permanent membership of Security Council i.e., Russia, Vietnam, Laos and Cyprus. Apart from getting support for Indian candidature, a major break-through of this UNGA was acceptance of Indian draft of a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. This Convention commits Member States to combat the menace of international terrorism, and more importantly it also commits them to stop all assistance and sponsorship for terrorism emanating from their territory. During his speech in Security Council must be made more representative, with developing countries inducted as members to reflect the changes in the UN membership and realities.

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4.	Durban (CHOGM) (12-15 Nov. 1999)	EAM was a member of the Indian delegation to the Summit Meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Durban, South Africa, from 12-15 November, 1999. EAM assisted the Prime Minister in his discussions during the executive sessions at CHOGM.	India played a leading role in the discussions on the political and economic issues as well as in the drafting of the Durban Communique and the Fancourt Declaration issued at the conclusion of the meeting. Heads of Government Commonwealth's fundamental political values and reviewed global political and economic developments. They called for firm deterrent measures by the UNSC against States, entities and organisations which harbour and train terrorists or promote international terrorism. They called for increased international cooperation to ensure that benefits of globalisation are shared more equitably. CHOGM endorsed the decision to suspend the military regime in Pakistan from the councils of the Commonwealth pending restoration of democracy, requested the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group to keep the situation in Pakistan under review.
5.	Japan (23-26 Nov. 1999)	Japan (November 23-26,	During EAM's visit to Japan, both sides decided on following: — India and Japan agreed to reinvigorate high-level contacts. An invitation was extended to the Japanese Prime Minister to visit India (the then Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori visited India on 21-25 August, 2000). — EAM invited Japanese Foreign Minister to visit India. — Both sides decided to re-constitute the Parliamentary

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— They agreed to pursue the initiative of setting up an

Eminent Persons' Group to enhance the bilateral relations with new dynamism (the Eminent Persons' Group has been set up. The first meeting was held on 29*90 January 2001. The second meeting is expected to take place in the last quarter of 2001).

— Both sides decided to celebrate appropriately the 50th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Japan.

— Both agreed to pursue high-level dialogue at Vice Ministers' and Secretary level to discuss political, economic and commercial issues.

— Both sides decided to institute a Comprehensive Security Dialogue (the first Comprehensive Security Dialogue held in Tokyo on 18 July, 2001).

— Official level institutional dialogue between India and Japan will be held on disarmament and non-proliferation issues and Asian matters.

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Sl. No	Name of the country visited	Details of the foreign visited	Outcome of each such visit
6.	Helsinki (2-3 Dec. 1999)	EAM met with Chris Patten, Commissioner for Relations of the EU. leaders discussed India-relations and important global issues, especially co-in specific areas such A drugs environment, human rights and civil society dialogue.	The EU Troika Ministerial Meeting was productive as these discussions focussed on areas South Asian security and prospects of Europe and the 21st Century. The discussions led to a understanding on the growth of fundamentalism, rise cross border terrorism and the spread of the Taliban ideology. Subsequently, during the visit of Patten in January 2001 the first India-EU Round was launched on 29th January, 2001.
7.	Afghanistan (31 Dec. 1999)	EAM visited Afghanistan on 31.12.1999.	EAM visited Kandahar, Afghanistan for the release hostages in the hijacked Indian Airlines flight IC-814. EAM had decided to go to Kandahar, Afghanistan so as to ensure that the termination of hijacking, the smooth release of and safe return of passengers and crew took place without any last
8.	Italy (11-12 Jan. 2000)	The visit was a bilateral visit during which EAM consultations with his counterpart on measures to strengthen and exchanged views on a wide range of regional and international issues of mutual interest. India and to strengthen their to fight the menace of terrorism.	The visit helped in promotion of better friendship and increased cooperation between the countries.

United Kingdom
12—14 2000
24—27 2000
13—17 2000

Several matters were during these visits global and regional issues. peace-keeping operations Security Council cooperation in terrorism and consular cooperation in the field education and cooperation.

In pursuance of these discussions, both taken a number of steps to further enhance India-relations. These include: the setting up of a governmental group, the India-UK Round broaden the bilateral dialogue and to suggest new consolidating the relationship. An India-UK Working Group has been established to institutional mechanism for cooperation in international terrorism and drug trafficking. A Consultative group has been meeting to further bilateral defence cooperation and an official level dialogue has commenced to enhance mutual understanding on issues pertaining to disarmament and non-proliferation.

10. Oman
(20-23 Jan. 2000)

Oman/20-23.1.2000, to attend IOR/ARC Meeting

Development of greater understanding and review of multilateral matters in the Indian Ocean Region.

11. Nigeria
(27-29 March, 2000)

To lead the Indian delegation at the Third Session of Indo-Nigerian Commission.

The agreed Minutes of the meeting of the third session of Indo-Nigerian Joint Commission provided a momentum to the economic content of Indo-
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			bilateral relations. EAM met his counterpart and called on Nigerian President Obasanjo, thereby reinforcing the momentum in Indo-Nigerian relations.
12.	Portugal March 30 - April 1, 2000	The visit from March 30-April, 2000 was undertaken for preparation for the first ever Indo-EU Summit in end June 2000. EAM had extensive consultation with his Portuguese counterpart on bilateral, regional and international issues. He signed an agreement on economic & Industrial Cooperation between India and Portugal on 31st March, 2000.	The visit from March 30-April 1, enabled Portugal as president of the EU, to understand India's perspective on bilateral, regional and international issues and facilitated preparation for the forthcoming first ever India-EU Summit in end June, 2000.
	27-29 June, 2000	EAM visited Portugal from 27 - 29 June, 2000 as a member of the official delegation led by the PM for Indo-EU Summit as well as Indo-Portugal Bilateral Summit. An Agreement was signed on financing of Civil Aviation Sector.	During the visit from 27-29 June, 2000 EAM participated in both the bilateral and EU Troika meetings with PM. The visit helped in further strengthening relations between India and the EU as well as with Portugal. It also enabled both sides to discuss bottlenecks in India-EU commercial and economic cooperation.

13. Cartagena, Colombia To attend NAM summit held in India's concerns with regards to the developments that
(8-9 April, 2000) Cartagena, Colombia, 8-9 have taken place in neighbouring Afghanistan in the
April, 2000 Taliban regime, particularly with respect to the safety and
security of Indian nationals living in Afghanistan, found
expression through the NAM communique. The subject of
humanitarian intervention, which would entail unwarranted
interference in the country's internal affairs
was also rejected. India's proposal for adoption of a
comprehensive convention on international terrorism also
received support through the communique. India's initiative to
take into account concerns of predominant agrarian economies in
multilateral negotiations on agriculture were also incorporated in
the communique.
 14. Iran EAM visited Iran on 19-23 An MOU was signed incorporating all items discussed and
(19-23 May, 2000) May, 2000. agreed to in the meetings of six committees on Petroleum &
Natural Gas; Trade Transport and Communications; Industry;
Agriculture & Rural Development and Culture, consular,
Information and Science & Technology. An agreement was also
signed on the establishment of a Joint Committee on the supply
of Iranian gas to India. The mandate of the Committee is to study
and examine all aspects relating to the Gas Pipeline from Iran to
India.
 15. Singapore There were detailed discussions The two sides agreed to work closely to enhance
(1—3 June, 2000) with Singapore PM, FM and cooperation in the areas of mutual concern like terrorism,
senior Minister Lee Kuan on sea-piracy etc. and India's interaction with ASEAN.
bilateral as well as regional
issues.
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16.	Sri Lanka (11-12 June 2000)	Sri Lanka June 11-12, 2000	The Minister of External Affairs held discussions with the Sri Lanka President, Foreign Minister, Leader of the Opposition and several other political leaders. During the visit, India offered to extend Sri Lanka a credit line of US \$100 million. The possibilities of Sri Lanka's purchasing wheat, rice and sugar on a counter trade basis from India, were also discussed.
17.	Russian Federation (22-24 June, 2000)	Bilateral visit to the Russian Federation from June 22-24, 2000	Minister of External Affairs had detailed discussions with the Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. Igor Ivanov on bilateral matters and on regional and international issues of mutual interest. Minister of External Affairs called on the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin. He met Secretary of the Security Council, Mr. Sergei Ivanov and the Deputy Prime Minister and the then Co-Chairman of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission, Dr. Viktor Khristenko. EAM also visited St. Petersburg where he met the Governor of St. Petersburg, Mr. Vladimir Yakoviev and addressed the School of International Relations, University of St. Petersburg on "The dimensions of India's Foreign Policy in the New Millennium". The visit helped in strengthening Indo-Russian bilateral relations and to prepare for the visit of Russian President Putin to India in October 2000. During a joint Press Conference with EAM, the Russian Foreign Minister once again publicly expressed Russia's support to India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council.

18 Warsaw, Poland
(25-27 June, 2000)

To attend Ministerial Meeting on the Community of Democracies held in Warsaw, Poland 25-27 June, 2000.

India was successful in conveying its primary concerns, such as avoidance of extraneous bilateral issues between members, state sponsored, cross border and other forms of terrorism and threat posed to democratic regimes by the overthrow of constitutionally elected governments, through the communique.

At Warsaw, India was one of the Co-Convenors of the Conference Towards a Community of Democracies". The other Convenors were Poland, Chile, the Czech Republic, South Korea, Mali and the USA. During the visit, EAM interacted with President of Poland Alexander kwasniewski, Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek, the Speakers of the two Houses of the Parliament and Foreign Minister Bronislaw Geremek. EAM also met with US Secretary of

State Madeleine Albright and the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

19. Palestine
(30 June 2000)

Minister of External Affairs called on the President and held discussions with Minister of Planning and International Cooperation and the Secretary General of the Presidency.

To convey solidarity with the Palestinian people and to inaugurate two Indian-funded projects in the Palestinian territories.

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20.	Israel (30 June—3 July, 2000)	In addition to calls on the President and Prime minister, EAM had discussions with Foreign Minister, Minister for Regional Development and the Opposition Leader. The two sides agreed to set up a Ministerial-level Joint Commission with a view to developing a long-term framework of cooperation and to monitor ongoing interactions. No agreement was signed during the visit.	The visit enabled the two sides to focus on strengthening existing multifaceted cooperation, in the fields of Agriculture, Science and Technology, Defence and Trade.
21.	Bangkok (26—29 July, 2000)	India's cooperative programme with ASEAN was discussed in the Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1 Meeting. The Global Economic situation was	India's involvement with ASEAN strengthens our relations with South East Asia - a region of commercial, political and strategic interest to us.

10+10 Meeting. No agreements were signed during the visit. 'Look-East-policy' and the stronger relations EAM also attended the 7th ARF Ministerial Meeting. The inaugural meeting of the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation was also held during this visit. EAM also held bilateral consultations with several other Foreign Ministers of the ARF Member States.

India's association with the ARF is consistent with attempting with South-East Asian countries. The part of our extended neighbourhood and India both from and contributes to the peace, security and the region. The ASEAN Post Ministerial useful as they focus on trade, investment and cooperation issues. The Mekong-Ganga six country initiative designed to strengthen Tourism, Culture, Human Resource Communication fields.

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22. Switzerland (4 Sept. The visit was a This was the first Ministerial exchange since 1981
Bilateral visit. and
- 2000) There was exchange of views marked the substantive upgrading in relations on wide range of issues viz. bilateral trade especially Swiss investments in bilateral - political and trade infrastructure sector, financial services, insurance developments in the Indian and field of information technology are region, the EU disarmament increase.
and non-proliferation,
development funding

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23.	USA (7-19 Sept. 2000)	EAM visited Washington to accompany the Minister on official visit. held with President Clinton his administration. meetings with Joint Session Congress, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, House International Committee, India Caucus, Business Chambers and think tanks. Signed Joint MoU on Cooperation Energy Sector; and project agreements at level Trade Chambers. To accompany the Prime Minister to the UN Summit and to attend the UNGA Sesison held in York, USA 7-19 September, 2000	Visit helped consolidate and deepen new friendship between India and U.S. By interacting two Presidential Candidates, reaffirmed bipartisan existing in U.S. for close ties with India. Helped raise India's international political and diplomatic profile. Private investment of about US \$6 bn. including about \$4 bn. for three power projects and a new US EXIM bank line of credit of Approx. SI bn. India's concerns with respect to issues such as the realization of a nuclear free world and challenges posed by terrorism, drugs and illicit arms trafficking, as well as the necessity for Security Council reform, were through the Millennium Declaration. India's take on the responsibilities of permanent membership the Security Council were also reiterated once through EAM's Statement delivered on behalf of India ir the General Debate of the Millennium Assembly.
	New York, USA (7—Sept. 2000)		

24. Algeria (23-5-2000) Oct. Minister of External Affairs The areas of mutual cooperation were identified and it was decided to put in place an institutional frame-work to enhance bilateral cooperation was received by the President and the Prime Minister. He had detailed exchange of views on global and bilateral issues with the Algerian counterpart. The efforts were aimed at diversification of the existing excellent relations between the two countries. MoU on Foreign Office Consultations was signed.
25. Vietnam (6-8 Nov. 2000) EAM co-chaired the 10th India-Vietnam Joint Commission Meeting and a separate meeting with his counterpart. EAM also called on the President and the Prime Minister of Vietnam. During all these meeting /calls, bilateral, regional and international issues were discussed.

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26.	bo PDR (8-10 Nov 2000)	EAM co-chaired 3rd India-Lao Joint Commission Meeting and attended Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Meeting. EAM also called on the President and the Prime Minister of Lao besides his counterpart, the Dy. PM and FM.	Three bilateral agreements were signed (i) Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (ii) Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation and (iii) Work Plan under the MoU on Agriculture. At the conclusion of Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Meeting, a 'Vientiane Declaration' was adopted. During calls issues of bilateral and mutual interest were discussed.
27.	Germany (17-2001)	EAM visited Germany for inauguration of new Chancery Building and bilateral meeting. He utilised the opportunity to meet his German counterpart Mr. Joschka Fischer.	He met with FM Joschka Fischer and other officials of the German government where he held discussions on important strategic issues of mutual interest.
28.	Saudi Arabia (20-21 2001)	Saudi . Arabi*20-21.1.2001 bilateral visit.	Bilateral relations were further strengthened. MoU Foreign Office Consultations was signed and an MoU on Co-operation in Combating Crime was agreed to.
29.	Syria (30 Jan.-1 Feb 2001)	EAM exchanged views on issues of bilateral concern with the Syrian President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. The talks were aimed at enhancing	EAM exchanged views on bilateral regional and global issues. It was decided to enhance the economic content of the bilateral relationship.

- 30.^ Egypt (3-4 Feb. 2001) The 4th Session of the Indo- discussions examin methods an ways
Egypt Joint Commission was strengthening bilateral cooperation, i as well wide
held in Cairo. The Egyptian on regiona an globa issues of
side was headed by Foreign interest.
Minister Amre Moussa. The
talks included discussions on
ways to strengthen bilateral
cooperation as well as an
exchange of views on crucial
regional and global issues of
mutual interest. The two sides
signed the following:
1. Protocol for cooperation
between the Foreign Service
Institute of India and the
Institute for Diplomatic
Studies of the Arab
Republic of Egypt.
 2. The minutes of the Joint
Commission Meeting including
the deliberations of the four
sub-committees which looked
into following fields:
 - (a) Trade and Economic
Cooperation
 - (b) Scientific and Technological
Cooperation
 - (c) Cultural Cooperation
 - (d) Information Technology and
Electronics

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31.	Myanmar (13-15 Feb. 2001)	The visit was part of the ongoing high level interaction between India and Myanmar.	The visit gave an impetus to bilateral Cooperation. Minister of External Affairs (EAM) had discussions with the Myanmar leadership including on various issues of bilateral interest. The two sides reviewed the progress of the proposed cross-border projects. EAM inaugurated the Tamu-Kalemyo-Kalewa road during the visit, which was upgraded with the Indian assistance. EAM also inaugurated the India-Myanmar Friendship Centre for Remote Sensing and Data Processing in Yangon. The Centre was set up with the assistance of Government of
32.	Denmark (2-3 April, 2001)	The visit was a working visit on the invitation of Danish Foreign Minister. During the visit, EAM had meetings with Danish PM and FM.	During EAM's visit the Danish Foreign Minister conveyed Denmark's support for the comprehensive convention on international Terrorism as proposed by India in the UN General Assembly. Denmark also agreed to promote bilateral trade investments by Danish Companies in India.
33.	Sweden (3-4 April, 2001)	EAM visited Stockholm to attend the 13th India-EU Troika Ministerial Meeting.	The meeting is part of the annual consultations with the EU Troika at ministerial level and highlights the growing importance of these relations.
34.	USA (5-7 April, 2001)	EAM visited Washington D.C. at the invitation of U.S. Secretary of State. Discussions held with President Bush, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defence and National Security Adviser—on Commitment of both sides to speed up pace of Indo-U.S. relations.	Visit within six months of new U.S. Administration coming to office indicative of seriousness of purpose by both sides, to maintain close ties, as provided for under dialogue Architecture. Two sides have agreed in principle to resume defence cooperation.

- 35 Iran
 . (9-13 May, 2001)
- EAM visited Iran on 9-13 May, 2001 as member of Prime Minister's official delegation.
- During Prime Minister's visit the Tehran Declaration and six Agreements/MoUs were signed. These were agreements on:
- (i) Trade and Economic Cooperation; and
 - (ii) Customs Cooperation. MoUs were signed on:
 - (i) Information Technology;
 - (ii) Cooperation in the field of Energy; (iii) Cooperation in the field of Power (Conventional and non-conventional sources); and (iv) Technical Cooperation.
- 36 Australia
 . (19-24 June, 2001)
- EAM participated in the first India-Australia Ministerial Framework Meeting to further Strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries. EAM also met Australian PM Howard, Trade Minister Mark Vaile, Defence Minister Peter Reith, FM Downer and Opposition leader, Kim Beazley, Leader of Labour Party.
- During the meeting with EAM, PM Howard said that he 'prized' relation with India and was very keen that these should prosper. Defence Minister of Australia emphasized the need to increase the structural content of the Defence relationship between India and Australia. He mentioned particularly the desire to enhance naval cooperation. During the India-Australia Ministerial Framework meeting with FM Downer, both sides agreed that India and Australia are factors for regional stability. Australia saw economic relations with offering great opportunities for trade and investment in view of the pace of economic reforms in India. Cooperation in Energy Sector was also recognized. Other matters of bilateral, regional and international significance were discussed at the meeting.
- 37 New Zealand (24-26
 . June, 2001)
- EAM also called on PM Helen Clark, FM Phil Goff and Defence Minister Mark Burton.
- During the meeting PM of New Zealand outlined assistance being rendered by New Zealand for conduct of election in Fiji in August. FM of New Zealand was also confident that election will be fair and impartial in Fiji. Discussions were also held on bilateral, regional and international issues.